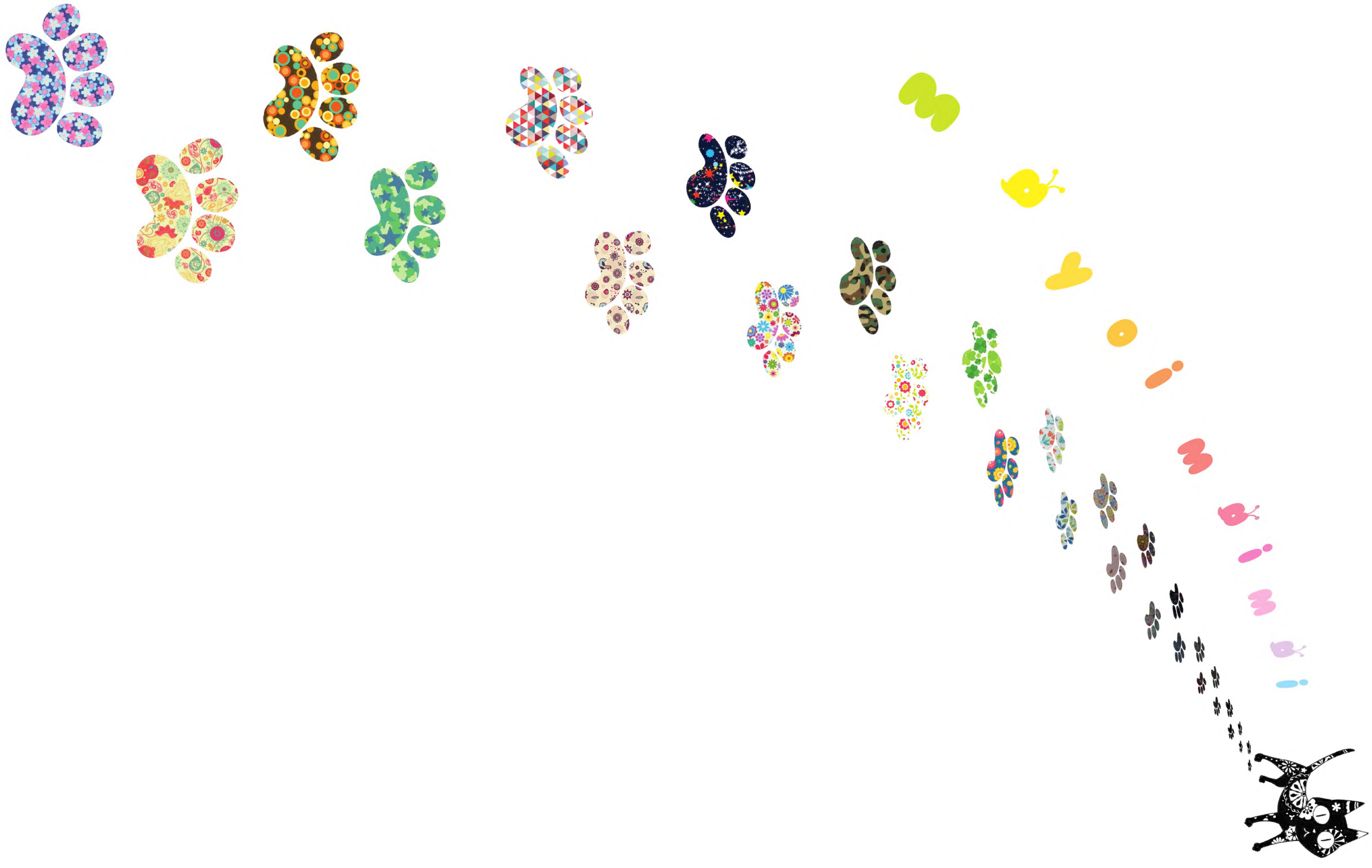
BAKEMONOGATARI 3

OH!GREAT

Original Story:
NISIOISIN

Original Character
Design: VOFAN



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千万両

BAKEMONOGATARI

OH!GREAT

ORIGINAL STORY:

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3

THE STORY SO FAR

One day, Koyomi Araragi encounters a grade schooler named Mayoi Hachikuji. Try as she may to visit her mother—who she hasn't seen since her parents' divorce—the girl can never arrive at her mother's. In an attempt to save this "Lost Snail," Koyomi sends Hitagi Senjogahara to Mèmè Oshino, an expert on aberrations. As Mayoi and Koyomi wait for Mèmè and Hitagi's solution, Tsubasa Hanekawa just so happens to pass by...

MAIN CHARACTERS

Hitagi Senjogahara

A girl whose weight was once taken away by a "crab." Thanks to Koyomi's efforts, she is now back to living a regular life.

Koyomi Araragi

A boy who was attacked by a vampire. Though he tries to help Mayoi find her way, he ends up getting lost with her.

Tsubasa Hanekawa

The infallible class president of Koyomi's class. Once bewitched by a "cat" while dealing with issues at home.

Mayoi Hachikuji

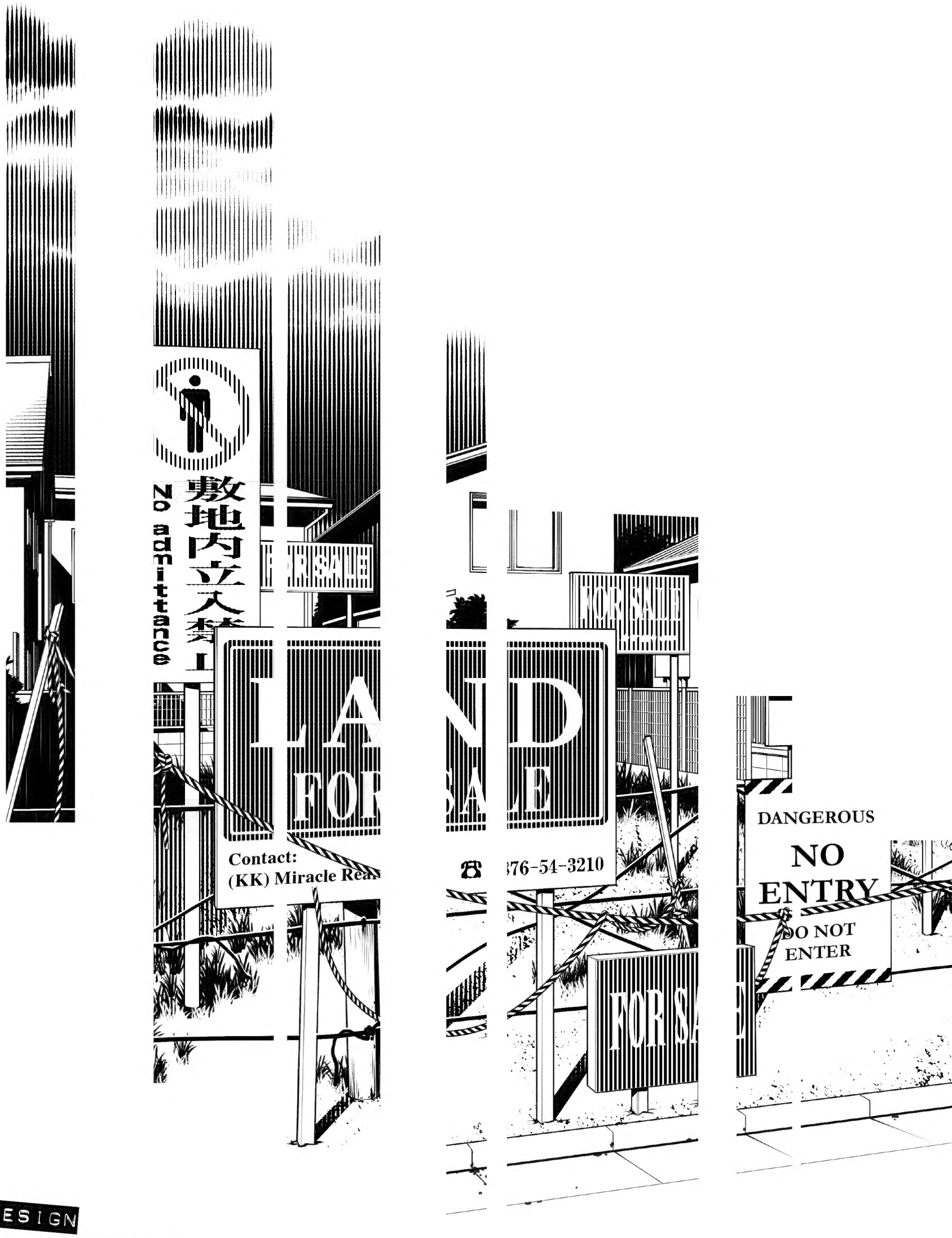
An elementary school student who Koyomi meets at a park. A "Lost Snail" who tries to visit her mother's home, but can never arrive.

Mèmè Oshino

An expert on aberrations who lives in the ruins of a former cram school. Saved Koyomi and helped Hitagi, as well.

Chapter 2

Mayoi Snail



BOOK DESIGN
VEIA

I'm right here.

When the words came out, I really did mean them.

It was almost like... we were the only two people here, in this world.

A cat and a demon
writhing in the depths of a labyrinth.

SST

So, you're lost, is that right? Where do you want to go?

I think I can show you the way.

Um... we're okay for now.

Senjogahara just went to ask someone for help.

Yeah ...

I wonder ...

Which is why I shouldn't recklessly toy with aberrations like I would with a scab,

and maybe I shouldn't let her get involved with them either.

How much does Hanekawa actually remember, and how much has she forgotten?

I don't know.

Because people...

will just get saved on their own.

there is nothing I can do for Hanekawa.

In the end,

BADMP

BDMP

BMP

Well... she's been taking her sweet time,

but she should be back soon.

So you were with Senjo-gahara?

What? Senjogahara? Oh, I see, Araragi.

=

you asked me about her, didn't you? Hmm...

She hasn't been coming to school lately— oh, but just the other day

Hmm ~?

OH!! I SEE!! SO THAT'S WHAT'S GOING ON?!

No... I'm pretty sure you're way off the mark ...

Ack... she's getting suspicious. Real suspicious ...

The power of her single-minded delusions is bursting at the seams...

WHPP

WELL, I DON'T WANT TO BE A NUISANCE, SO I'LL BE ON MY WAY!! SAY HELLO TO SENJO-GAHARA FOR ME!!

JIGGLE

BOING

DON'T SLACK OFF TOO MUCH JUST BECAUSE IT'S A SUNDAY!!

BOING

AND THEN !!

BOING

Okay.

AND THEN!! DON'T FORGET THERE'S A HISTORY QUIZ TOMORROW.

AND THEN!! WE NEED TO PREPARE FOR THE CULTURE FESTIVAL !!

WE'VE GOTTA BUCKLE DOWN SOON, SO GET READY, MISTER VICE PRESIDENT! OKAY?!

BOING

BOING

BOING

BOING

Okay.

Okay.

Meanwhile, I'm probably the only person who can synchronize with the velocity of Hanekawa's breasts.

She might be the biggest "and then" abuser since Natsume Soseki.

Hanekawa continued with nine more "and then"s.

AND THEN !!

BOING

BOING

Boing

Sorry. Can I just say one last thing?

Hm?

Oh, Hanekawa.

浪白公園

This park is for everyone. Please follow the rules on the other side so everyone can enjoy the park together.

Miss Tsunade?

Hm... Ohh, in that case—

Do you know if a Miss Tsunade lives around here...?

Naoetsu Town Map

...

No.
I don't.

Hm?

Like I'm always telling you, I just know what I know.

Oh.
So there are some things you don't know.

Don't let Senjogahara worry over you too much, okay?

Ara-ragi.

Sounds like we're outta luck. Sorry, Hachikuji.

Huh?
?

I'm always happy to, though.

I'll be going now.

At that point,

I had no idea what Hanekawa's supercomputer-class brain had noticed

and what conclusion she had reached.

Where did that come from...?

?

?

PRRING♪

PRRING♫

Fi-
nally.

And
then.

That
was the
moment
I acquired
Senjo-
gahara's
cell
number.

Sunday,
May 14,
14:15:30 p.m.

CONNECTED

100%

END CALL

MUTE

That'd be a Lost Cow there.

... yaawn.

A cow? She's not a cow.

I said she's a snail.

Hold on, Araragi.

Do you not know how "snail" is written in Japanese?

Talk about a low IQ.

If anyone has a low IQ here, it's you!!!

By the way, missy tsundere, can Araragi see my face with this thing?

CONNECT

SWITCH CAMERA

You have to write "cow" when you write "snail" in Japanese, right?

A snail shell goes around like a spiral until it hits a dead end in the middle, and...

well, YOU KNOW HOW IT IS.

but in this case, the aberration's name describes its nature, not its shape.

There are countless aberrations that could keep you from your destination...

© Mizuki Productions

Y'know, Araragi,

I bet you think aberrations are like light novels—that the illustrations come first

and then someone slaps on a name, don't you?

C'mon, kid,

That's not how it goes?

why act funny now...

Nope. It's the other way around.

名前

Name

Names ... in other words,

phenomena — or concepts, if you will— exist first,

THEN THEIR SHAPE FORMS AFTER THAT.

They say that names are what shape nature, but in this case

nature doesn't mean "physical appearance," but "essence."

Both cows and snails "move slowly and get in the way."

... yaawn... yup... that's what it is...

I COULDN'T POSSIBLY CARE LESS ABOUT THAT!!

Heh, I've always dreamed of having a high school girl shake me awake.

And now my dream's come true ❤ thanks to you, Araragi! Thanks... later, then—

Hey, Oshino! Wait!

Don't go to sleep yet!

I'll just tell Senjo-gahara how to deal with it... yeah.

Y'know, it's just like missy tsundere's "crab"...

Mmh ...

Senjo-gahara ...?

?!

Is she whis-pering... so that I can't hear?

Hm ?

CONNECTED

Well, then... I see...

That must've been tough, missy tsundere.

MUTE

END CALL

SWITCH CAMERA

Hm...

Oh... mhm...

CONNECTED

Jeez ...

I can't believe it...

MUTE

END CALL

SWITCH CAMERA

...

haah ...

CONNECTED

Anyway, you've made missy tsundere fuss over you so much... that she even feels responsible for you.

Shinobu, don't run off with the phone.

MUTE

END CALL

SWITCH CAMERA

You never cease to be a real pathetic guy, Araragi ...

Huh...?!

What're you talking about...? Sure, I feel bad about dragging Senjogahara into this, but...

Huh...? Didn't Hanekawa say something like that just a second ago...?

Listen up, Araragi.

What you see and feel isn't the whole truth.

Stop acting so damn con-ceited, ya brat.

Everything is not always how it looks.

Seeing isn't always believing, you know.

Can you just tell me how to destroy this... Lost Cow?

So?

Listen... forget about me for now.

CONNECTED

Sheesh ... again with the violent talk.

Some-thing good happen to you today?

SKRIT SKRIT

SWITCH CAMERA

END CALL

MUTE

To be honest, Oshino's harsh words

really hit me where it hurt

because they did ring a bell.

Which is why you shouldn't blindly get involved with aberrations.

According to Oshino, that is the rule.

Normally, it'd be an incredible stroke of "good luck" to have a specialist like Oshino nearby when confronting an aberration like this.

"Stop acting so damn conceited."

Untouchable

不可触

"If you don't get involved with aberrations, they won't get involved with you."

That... is the rule.

不可侵

Inviolable

As long as a rule is a rule, you shouldn't allow any exceptions.

Let them slip through your fingers and soon you'll find yourself in a sticky situation.

If you keep making exceptions, the very lines you've set in place will come crashing down.

Hachikuji, I was wondering.

Why do you want to visit your mother so much?

BEEP

Call ended

But.

I don't think a kid needs a special reason... to want to visit her mother.

So,

that's how it is.

Before me stands a distressed grade schooler who is possessed by an aberration.

Saving her

isn't something I need a special reason or emotion to feel like doing, correct?

DRAGER

Though, of course,

if it weren't for those two awful weeks during spring break,

I doubt I'd be thinking this way at all.

Mister Araragi.

You do realize

that I'm hungry, right?

So... what if you are?

The way she says it

makes it sound like I've forgotten to fulfill a very important obligation.

If there's a hungry child in front of you...

I don't think you need any special reason to—

CHOMP
CHOMP
CHOMP
CHOMP
CHOMP
CHOMP

...Are you not having any?

MUNCH モゴ

You're not getting any more.

STARE

モゴ MUNCH

Tasu Burger

I'll wait until Senjogahara gets back.

Oh, um...

YOUR HAND WAS ALSO DELICIOUS, MISTER ARARAGI!♡

I LIKE ANYTHING AS LONG AS IT'S FOOD!

Do you like hamburgers?

My hand isn't food.

OH, DON'T BE SO MODEST.

IT REALLY WAS GOOD!

She says and does a lot of things that set off red flags,

but when we're just hanging like this, she really is just a cute, ordinary grade schooler.

To be honest, I don't know too much about yokai and stuff...

how about you, Hachi-kuji?

No, not at all.

Just the *noppera-bo*, I guess.

Oh, Lafcadio Hearn's faceless monster...

An aberration, huh ...?

Er, what?

IT'S "*MUJINA.*"

from the book *Najimu.*

You know,

I used to be a really good kid.

You just made it sound that way earlier... and also 'cuz you were wandering around on Mother's Day.

Huh?

Why do you ask?

...

Mister Araragi... Are you not very fond of your parents?

Why is she so certain?

You're lying.

It's not a lie.

WHAT AM I, THE MAYOR OF LIAR VILLAGE?!?!

A LITTLE TRITE LIE NEVER HURT ANYONE.

THEN LET'S SAY IT'S OKAY TO LIE.

OH, IS THAT SO?

I never rebelled against my parents in middle school for no reason or anything.

I used to be a pretty good student and a decent athlete, too.

Senjo-gahara ...

Oh?

How praise-worthy.

I have two little sisters,

and they're a lot like me... yeah. Things were great at home until I blew it.

I wonder... how she feels about this kid.

There's no way she compares herself to Hachikuji like I do.

How so?

Senjogahara hasn't asked me a thing about Hanekawa's aberration.

that probably goes for Hanekawa, too.

And

I applied to a school that was way out of my league...

and somehow managed to get in.

Well, that's great. Congratulations.

But she still hasn't asked. She won't broach the subject. There's a sense of distance.

You wouldn't believe how bad it is when you're a washout at a school for smart kids.

I soon realized that I couldn't keep up.

No, it wasn't.

She has to wonder.

She... really is strong.

And when that happened, I went from being a good kid to being the opposite, and just as much, too.

But nothing specifically happened between me and my parents. It's just... kind of awkward around them. We all end up worrying about each other too much.

In that case,

I wonder how Senjo-gahara... feels about me.

...

Hm...?

What is... this feeling?

Senjogahara was there at the center of my being.
Before I knew it,
Senjogahara weighed so little that she nearly didn't at all.
She was the star of the track team.
It almost feels like something's come over me.
It happened after I met a crab.
Hitagi Senjogahara is "the girl who's always ill" in our class.

"Always a child," you say.

So... yeah.

That's why my two sisters told me

that I'm never gonna grow up—that I'll always be a child.

Then you're just like me.

I'll have you know

that I'm one of the better-developed students in my class.

Well, not exactly.

They mean I'm immature but at least my body's still growing.

What a rude thing to say to a lady, Mister Araragi.

PLOOP

...

Your chest was pretty impressive.

True.

there's no way I can tell her I was groping her for a while...

Oh no ...

When we were scuffling ...?

Ah... erm.

You touched my chest?!

When did you touch it ?!?!

What ?!?

Well, it's not like I did it on purpose.

It was only for a fraction of a second.

THAT'S EVEN MORE SHOCKING THAN THE FACT THAT YOU PUNCHED ME!

FLAIL

FLAIL

THAT'S NOT A SPLIT SECOND AT ALL, AND THAT'S CLEARLY INTENTIONAL!!

Yup! Only about eight firsts of a second!!

A FRACTION OF A SECOND ?!

WAS THAT REALLY ALL IT WAS ?!

your breasts groped my hands!!

THAT DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE!

I didn't grope your breasts ...

Think of it the other way around.

My first touch has been stolen from me...!

TREMBLE

Your first touch ?

Is that what kids say these days...?

What a naughty girl Mayoi Hachikuji has become ...!

To think that my first touch came before my first kiss...

TREMBLE

初キッスはパパ

Daddy Was My First Kiss

Come on, lighten up.

It's better than your father taking your first kiss, you know?

THAT SOUNDS LIKE A VERY "NOR-MAL" EVENT!

I need to give you the allowance I promised.

Oh yeah, Hachikuji, I forgot.

IT'S VERY ALARM-ING!!!

DON'T YOU DARE SAY THAT AT A TIME LIKE THIS!

...

Thank you?

No!

BAM

Anyway, Mister Araragi, you've been acting very brazen for some time now!

Isn't there some-thing you ought to say?!

And saying you won't forgive someone without an apology

is like admitting that you can't be magnanimous toward people who haven't debased themselves, isn't it?!

A grown man doesn't apolo-gize.

It cheapens his soul.

How cool ?!!

I MAY BE TOLERANT, BUT I ONLY HAVE SO MANY CHEEKS TO TURN!

TREMBLE

TREMBLE

TREMBLE

TREMBLE

TREMBLE

WHAT ...?!

WHY AM I BEING CRITICIZED HERE?!

ONLY MEN BELIEVE THAT SUPERSTITION!

People say they get bigger if you massage them, you know.

I'VE ONLY JUST STARTED PUBERTY, SO IT'S NOT GOING TO WASTE!

NOW YOU'RE BEING DOWNRIGHT DEFIANT!

What's the big deal? Your chest'll just go to waste otherwise.

WHAT'D YOU JUST SAY?! YOU KNOW WHAT A VIRGIN IS?!

WOW, YOU'RE HOPELESS!

GRRAH!

BUT INSTEAD I GOT A LOUSY VIRGIN LIKE YOU, MISTER ARARAGI! MY DREAMS HAVE BEEN SHATTERED!!

TREMBLE

TREMBLE

TREMBLE

I WANTED MY FIRST TO BE A SMOOTH OPERATOR!

GRRAAHH!

OH, QUIET DOWN! FINE, THEN! I'M JUST GONNA SQUEEZE THEM UNTIL YOU FORGET ALL THIS "FIRSTS" NONSENSE YOU'VE BEEN SPOUTING!!

A-AGH! THAT'S DANGEROUS! STOP IT!!

POW

BOOF

GRRAH! GRRAAHH!

Haah

Haah

Haah

Wheez

...

I can't believe her...

I bet she's eating right now.

KAAW

Senjo-gahara ...

sure is late ...

KAAW

...

Is something the matter, Mister Arararagi?

You know you added an extra "ra" this time...

CHOOMP

NO, I THIT MY THONGUE !!

IT WASN'T ON PURPOSE ?!!

SORRY, JUST A SLIP OF THE TONGUE !

No way.

You did it on purpose.

I won't go that far, but I've never messed up someone's name.

Or are you telling me that you've never misspoken?

Everyone trips over their own words now and then.

You botched it yourself.

Fine, then. Say, "she shells she-shells on the she-shore" three times in a row.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "SHE-SHELLS"?! ARE WOMEN ALL YOU EVER THINK ABOUT?!

YOU'RE THE ONE WHO SAID IT, NOT ME!

So, is something the matter?

Were you ruminating on how my chest feels different from your sister's?

NO!

I'D NEVER GRAB MY SISTER'S CHEST!

Only an unyielding spirit could make such a sarcastic remark.

A little sister's chest doesn't count as a woman's.

Oh, so you'd grope a grade schooler, but not your little sister. *That's* where you draw the line.

Whoever this Mister Araragi you're talking about is, he sounds like one hell of a pedophile.

Not someone I'd want as a friend.

You're the kind of guy who'd grab a grade schooler's chest, but not a middle schooler's, right?

Fine then, let me put it another way for you.

1. The chest of a blood relative shall no be coun ed as breasts, only as flesh and fat

Ah, I see. The way of **chests.**

Very enlightening.

NO!

You bet.

You seem to be trying to deny that you're a pedophile.

I understand that true pedophiles refuse to label themselves as such under any circumstance,

for they consider innocent young girls to be grownup women.

Thanks for the unwanted factoid...

WHPP

YOU REALLY LOVE DRAMATIC TENSION, DON'T YOU?

I understand. But *do you?*

SHOOMP

ROLL

ROLL

ROLL

ゴゴゴゴ

So,

tell me what happened, Mister Araragi.

Well, I was just thinking ... that maybe... no, surely ...

my two sisters must be waiting for me to come home...

I get it, you know?

I know I should apologize.

I know that...

but honestly, I don't want to go home.

...

My mother and father always fought.

but I've never seen them get along.

I heard they were madly in love before they married,

But they weren't going to get divorced.

Or... so she seemed to think.

NOTICE OF DIVORCE

She thought it was a given—that families always stayed together.

But.

It's only natural that they'd argue and come to hate one another.

It's certainly more natural than not fighting at all.

But if they'd wanted to stay in love...

to stay to-gether forever...

I think they both should've worked harder.

That doesn't sound very sincere.

That's like making a conscious effort to make it happen.

Working hard to love some-thing...?

But, Mister Ara-ragi,

isn't the feeling we call love

a very conscious thing from the start?

...I s'pose.

すはー SNOOORT

すはー SNOOORT

SNIFF SNIFF

Maybe she's right ... maybe

they should've tried harder if they didn't want it to fade.

Growing bored of something you love and coming to hate it
is so painful, isn't it? Isn't it dreary?
If you loved someone ten times over, it's like you're hating them twenty times over just to hate them as much as you loved them...
It's kinda de-press-ing.

love your mom, don't you?

Hachi-kuji— you...

Maybe *that* ...is how it is.

And I love my father, too.

Of course.

Putting all your weight in one direction means that the recoil coming back will be that much deeper and wider...

that's exactly why I feel so uneasy ...and scared.

But

If we're kept apart like this forever...

I worry

that I might forget all about her one day.

Hachikuji was possessed by a snail.

Which is why

Some-day...

won't I end up forgetting that

I love her?

Hachi-
kuji

has to wish
and work and
get in over
her head

all just
to keep
“loving her
mother.”

No...
wait a sec.

...

Hm?

...

...

Isn't that strange?

Oshino told me

that this case was *like Senjogahara's.*

Then... what exactly is the snail

doing to Hachi-kuji...?

That it was *the same situation with the "crab."*

She'd wanted to cut ties with her mother ...

and lose the "weight" that was placed upon her.

Weight

That "crab" had granted Senjo-gahara's wish.

Hachikuji

Organisms that live by the shore

If this case is like hers...

that would mean

that Hachikuji wants to go see her mother,

but she can't.

But why not ...?

Why is the snail in her way...?

Keep staring like that

and you'll make me blush.

Is something wrong, Mister Araragi?

You see, I'm a *friend fatale.*

Fall in love with me and you'll get a low-temperature burn.

She must've meant "femme fatale."

What does that even mean?

SNIFF

SNIFF

I SMELL AN-OTHER WOM-AN.

ビクッ

JOLT

Oh!

Wel-come back ...

Senjo-gahara!

...

SNIFF

SNIFF

SNIFF SNIFF

Doesn't smell like you two had a love scene or anything...

This scent ...

must be Hanekawa. I think she's the only girl in our class who uses this brand ...

Whuh ...?

Do women... really know this kinda stuff?

... Really ...?

To some degree.

It's like your ability to identify a girl by the shape of her hips, Araragi.

I DON'T REMEMBER EVER EXHIBITING THAT SPECIAL ABILITY!!

WHY ARE YOU ACTING SO SURPRISED ?!

...You... can't?

...Oh?

THAT'S WHAT A DIRTY OLD MAN WOULD SAY!!!

And your hips aren't even motherly.

But you were kind enough to compliment me the other day. "Ah, what a **nice, seated pelvis and motherly hips.** I bet you'll give birth to a bouncing baby boy, ***GEH HEH HEH HEH!***"

Did you call her here, Araragi?

Now that you mention it, she lives in this area, doesn't she? She'd serve us well as a guide.

So, Hanekawa was here.

...

She's kinda scaring me now.

Just like you!

She happened to be passing by.

No...! I didn't.

Just like

me...

huh?

KLONK

Just like me.

Huh ?

SHEP

You never know when coincidences come in pairs... or that's what we'll call it, at least.

So that is what happened.

I see.

Right?

She patted Hachikuji on the head like this... and then left.

KREAK

KREAK

Did Hane-kawa say anything ?

No, not really.

We just talked a little.

patted her on the head... hm... okay.

Uh-huh ...

I could see Hanekawa doing that ...

I suppose?

Huh?

As in she likes kids, unlike you?

Well, Hanekawa and I are quite different.

It's true.

We're not the same.

We're not the same.

Any-way, Ara-ragi.

I seem to owe you an apology.

Huh?

?

What is?

He said it's the other way around.

and two people observe it from their own viewpoints and reach different conclusions— that happens, right?

16:55
Sunday, May 14
Enter your password

Say we take a certain fact...

Mis-ter Oshi-no put it like this:

VIDEO PLAY
BUFFERIN

If you're looking for a method that'll determine which point of view is correct...

it simply doesn't exist.

There's no way... to prove you are right in this world.

Get it, Araragi ?

This guy really talks like he sees through everything.

I hate it.

And if I turn it this way, it'll look like a "rectangle."

However, its true essence is neither a circle nor a rectangle, but a "cylinder."

四

Quadrilateral

角

In other words, that's how it is.

丸

Circle

that you're mistaken.

it's equally wrong to conclude

But that's exactly why

From your point of view, Araragi,

this cigarette looks like a "circle,"

right?

TURN

the essence of an object changes its shape.

and "position,"

Depending on your "angle"

...

I get... what you mean...

but what're you saying?

What are you talking about, Oshino?

This is no time... to be going on about—

Man— what an interesting town this is. Just look at all these tangled fates.

Lost snails and cows... and we've even got "Tsunade" for "rope."

It all seems like one big pun to me... good grief.

Okay, so the "Hachiku" part of the name Hachikuji... was originally written using the characters that make up the word "black bamboo."

That shows up in Shinonome Monogatari, correct?

Didn't you learn that one in class, Araragi?

But then it got changed to the characters "eight" and "nine," or "hachi" and "ku"—

and well, it's all just a play on words, really.

How dumb.

MUTTER ボソ

Yeah... of course.

...Shikoku?

This involves the smallest of Japan's four major islands...?

SHIKOKU 88 TEMPLE PILGRIMAGE MAP

EHIME PREFECTURE / PATH TO ENLIGHTENMENT

PATH TO NIRVANA

TOKUSHIMA PREFECTURE / PATH TO AWAKENING

Even you must have heard of some of Japan's famous pilgrimages, right?

Like the eighty-eight temple pilgrimage in Shikoku, or the thirty-three temple pilgrimage in the western region?

eighty-nine temples put their names on a list called just that.

"Ji" means temple, but "Hachiku-ji" isn't the name of a specific temple... instead, long ago,

Well, "Hachikuji" is one of those pilgrimages.

千客万来

Thriving Business

really, people thought it would bring them good fortune...

how-ever.

Well, the Hachikuji list got one up on the eighty-eight temple pilgrimage in Shikoku...

You know the phrase "Once you start cutting bamboo, there's no stopping the knife?"

"ya-ku."

"Eight" and "nine" together can also be written as

Misfor-tune.

Isn't that right?

NAME 八九寺真宵

That would read "HACHI-KUJI."

See th... little kid ove... ther...

How do you read her name...? The name on her tag.

and thought it was pronounced "Yakudera" ...

When I first saw Hachikuji's name, I couldn't read it

Oh... that re-minds me...

厄

are gone by now.

In any case, the interpretation spread, and all those temples went on the decline. Most of them...

Language is a living thing, as they say.

So they accidentally gave the pilgrimage the worst possible meaning...

when you see the name "Mayoi Hachi-kuji" ...?

So, with that bit of history in mind,

what do you think of

Doesn't it all seem a little too meaningful to you, Araragi?

it seems that... it's the other way around, Araragi.

And so,

BEEP

PLAYBACK STOP

PLAY

STOP

Explaining it in words is very simple:

you will not be lost if you distance yourself from the snail—

Or, on the flip side,

You will stay lost as long as you follow the snail.

or so he says.

What does that even mean...?

Following it gets me lost...?

...Huh?

What's happening is that a certain person is *ap-proaching* the aber-ration, is all.

With this snail... there's no need for exorcism or prayer.

No one is being possessed... or harmed.

ZSSHH

he's just going along with the snail and that's why he's lost.

Entirely of his own volition, too...

Again,

No, it can't be.

The snail's possessed Hachikuji and—

...?

Are you saying that... *I'm* following this snail around?

or rather, something like a ghost.

is less of a *yokai* and more of a residual haunting...

To simplify what Mister Oshino said, this snail

it's the other way around.

Beings who die before reaching their destination stop others from going home.

On the way there, the way back, on the journey and the return.

Around and around the pilgrim's *haunted path.*

That's why...

I need to apologize to you, Araragi.

But please, let me explain. I absolutely wasn't wary... out of malice, or even on purpose.

I was just sure that *I was the one* who was mistaken...

I mean, why wouldn't I think that? There was *something strange* about me for over two years...

I was *seeing* it wrong, and your *view* was right.

Hey.

Senjo-gahara ...?

Can you blame me... for not getting it?

SENJO-GAHARA!!

I can't see that girl.

would be too far in the past for this story.

Long, long, ago...

Dismal back-and-forths in a quagmire of a mar-riage that collapsed before it turned bloody.

It was only about ten years ago.

BAKEMONOGATARI

and made a vow to her father. Half by force.

And so, the girl was whisked away by her father, had to aban-don her moth-er's sur-name,

never see my mother again."

"I will

What does it mean? Can one really say that she was forced to do it?

But if she was "half-forced," what about the other half?

of her own volition.

Ford

It was "half"

Major Hachikuji's Mental Analysis

46%

54%

Forced

She said it all the same.

Was she really forced to do it?

She found that time was as kind to her as it was to anyone else.

Two years later, the girl was in shock.

She couldn't remember her mother's face.

Time is so cruel that it's kind. It washes away everything,

even memories of a mother.

She felt no sadness, no anger, no frustration.

All thoughts and feelings fade with time.

Which is why... the daughter decided to go see her mother without telling a soul.

She didn't even tell her mother.

She was too scared. What if her mother hated her? Or saw her as a nuisance?

The girl was ready to turn back at any time.

But even then, she stuffed her backpack with old memories that would delight her dear mother, gripping the note with her address so she wouldn't get lost.

More than anything, she did it because she was scared

of being forgotten by her mother.

All thoughts and feelings

require active effort or else they'll

fade away.

WOOM

The light was green.

But the daughter never made it to her mother's home.

Hachikuji

She was so sure

the light was green—

CRASH

ever since.

you've been lost...

So ...

I'm sorry... for not telling you...

and "essence."

Names describe bodies...

I know we're talking about a snail here...

but I have to wonder— *maybe the aberration doesn't necessarily take the form of a snail.*

the aberration itself is lost.

The reason the Lost Cow is *lost* and not *misleading* is because

Seeing isn't always believing.
And on the flip side,
not seeing isn't always
believing either,
Araragi.

Which is why

the word can also mean "lost."

In the past, "Mayoi" was a word that described the warp and weft of textiles fraying and tangling.

It refers to the attach-ments that keep dead spirits

from resting in peace.

Moreover, the character "yoi"

means the time around dusk—when strange spirits run amok.

But add the character for "ma,"

which usually means "true,"

and you get

"true night." The witching hour.

Or so it seems.

And I can't hear her, either.

But Senjo-gahara,

But you were acting like you...

That's right.

are you really telling me you can't see Hachikuji?

Oh.

No... wait. I'm wrong.

She'd said that... from the start ...!!

NAME Class 5-3 ハ九寺

See that little kid over there?

How do you read her name...? The name on her tag.

Huh?

I don't see what you're talking about.

Hey, Senjo-gahara.

All I saw in front of that sign...

was you mumbling to yourself and miming a crazed fight...

Oh...
right.

Oh yeah. I explained the whole situation to Senjogahara ...

I guess that's why Senjo-gahara ...

Of course,

I had no idea what you were doing, but then you told me...

didn't take the note from me...

I don't want to touch anything that's touched you.

I thought that she hated me... but she really just couldn't see the note.

But

if you'd just told me that to begin with...

I couldn't.

There was no way... I could tell you.

If I can't see what you see,

it's only normal for me to assume

that I'm the strange one for not being able to see it.

Two years.

For more than two years, Hitagi Senjogahara had to live with a crab aberration

that created "discord with those around her."

The thought that she's "abnormal" is hammered into her head.

She'd just thought that *something was wrong with her again*.

But she didn't want to think it—she didn't want to believe it.

I bet that was why Senjogahara ... felt like she couldn't say anything.

SQUEEZE

Anyway, you've made missy tsundere fuss over you so much... that she even feels responsible for you.

Shinobu, don't run off with the phone.

MUTE
END CALL
SWITCH CAMERA

You never cease to be a real pathetic guy, Araragi ...

She was afraid

Aberration

SCHOO ROAD

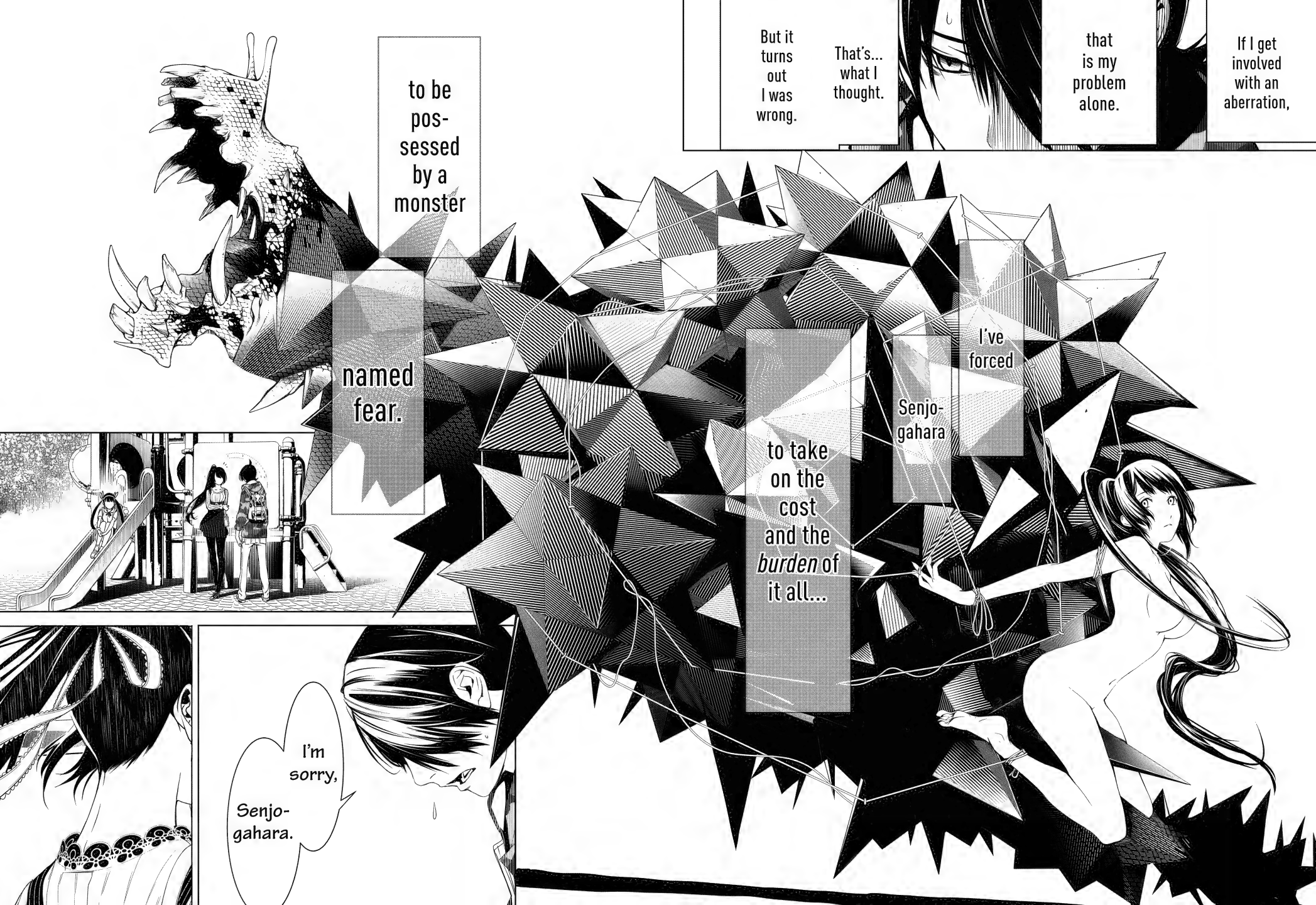
that I would leave her behind.

What am I doing ...?

Honestly... it makes me wonder.

don't let Senjogahara worry over you too much, okay?

Ara-ragi,


But it turns out I was wrong.
That's... what I thought.
that is my problem alone.
If I get involved with an aberration,
to be possessed by a monster
named fear.
to take on the cost and the *burden* of it all...
Senjo-gahara
I've forced
I'm sorry, Senjo-gahara.

KONK

It's okay.

HOW MANY TIMES ARE YOU GOING TO MAKE ME SAY IT, ARARAGI? I WANT TO HELP YOU.

So,

how are we going to deal with this aberration...?

That... is what we were dealing with.

Right.

LOST

Hachikuji didn't cross an aberration,

she's an aberration *herself*.

Hachikuji said so herself... from the beginning...

I'm a lost snail.

But she's right.

Right... that must be it.

So I was the one who encountered the aberration...

Like the ghost in the kimono who makes travelers lose their way in the mountains,

or the girl who sneaks into groups of playing children and snatches one up at the end.

Child aberrations... little girls, in particular, are apparently quite common.

They're so common that even I know a few.

to meet a Lost Cow,

Mister Oshino said that

Watch for Snails

you have to wish... *not* to return home.

I don't want to go home

STOP

DEAD END

TURN AROUND

DO NOT PROCEED

It might sound too bleak to be called a "wish,"

but we've all wished that before. We all have issues at home.

Right... that goes for her, too.

Oh!!

Tsubasa Hane-kawa!!

Her wish "not to go home" was just as strong as... no, it was *way* stronger than mine.

"I take walks on Sun-days."

That's why she could see Hachi-kuji.

She saw her, touched her, spoke to her.

RUB

RUB

Yes.

AN ABER-RATION THAT GRANTS A WISH,

huh...

Same

同じ

"It's the same as the crab."

but you could also call it taking advantage of someone's weakness.

it sounds nice when you put it that way,

A "wish" ...

Well ...

I mean ...

it's not like you really don't want to go back home, right?

she's not wrong.

I can wish all I want,

but I have to go home even-tually.

In the end,

no matter what kind of place it is,

home is the only place you can return to.

But... that's exactly why

it's so easy to deal with a Lost Cow.

Distance yourself.

That's all you need to do.

Don't follow it.

Remember what I said at the begin-ning?

Following a snail that will never get anywhere for all eternity

is a sure-fire way to never get home.

I'm lost because it's what I wished for.

I get it.

It makes sense.

Just like when Hanekawa walked away from Hachikuji.

If I wanted to go home, I could do so whenever I please.

Trick or Treat

NOT DISAPPEAR

SURPRISED?

A Lost Cow plays pranks and it's a little mysterious... but that's it.

It's not a particularly malicious or powerful aberration. It's not all that harmful.

So...

So?

So what,

Senjo-gahara?

That's not it. Not it at all.

Your story certainly adds up

and gives me a neat little explanation for the things that have been bothering me,

but

that's not what I wanted you to ask Oshino...!

I didn't ask you to get an etymological explanation!

If I'd wanted an explanation like that...

I wouldn't have sent you all the way to Oshino's ...!!

Then

why did you...?

Because ...

this!!!

IT'S ABOUT THIS KID!! HACHIKUJI !!

WE NEED TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO BRING HER BACK TO HER MOTHER —

AND THAT'S IT!!

THAT'S ALL IT'S BEEN ABOUT FROM THE VERY BEGINNING!!

THAT IS WHAT I WANTED TO KNOW!!

It's not about Koyomi Araragi. It's about Mayoi Hachikuji and no one else.

Don't you get it, Araragi?

That girl... isn't there.

She's already ... dead.

She's not there

or anywhere else.

SO WHAT?!

She's not possessed by an aberration...

she's an aberration herself—

If you think I should distance myself from her...

then you're wrong.

I... won't walk away from her.

that...

hurts.

Uh...

Mister Araragi... th-...

You... couldn't hear her, Senjogahara, could you?!

Well then, let me repeat it!

SHUT THE HELL UP!!

I'm...

Umm... that lady... Miss Senjo-gahara is right. I...

I don't like you.

Please don't speak to me.

Having to tell every single person you meet to go away,

Do you know how it feels, Senjo-gahara?!

having to bite any hand that strokes your head...

I can't even ima-gine how she must feel ...

We're... the same, aren't we...?

But even so...

When you lose your way

and you're standing there, alone, don't you think

I can never say... that I don't rely on anyone.

That's why

Crowd

"I'm the strange one."

おかしいのは自分だからって

"I'm the strange one."

おかしいのは自分だからって

Crowd

Individual

Individual

Isn't it the same for you,

Senjo-gahara?

and Hachi-kuji's mother can't see her... or even smell her,

So...

I don't know if she's a Lost Cow or a snail or whatever...

and I know that you

but I'm going to find her a place to call home.

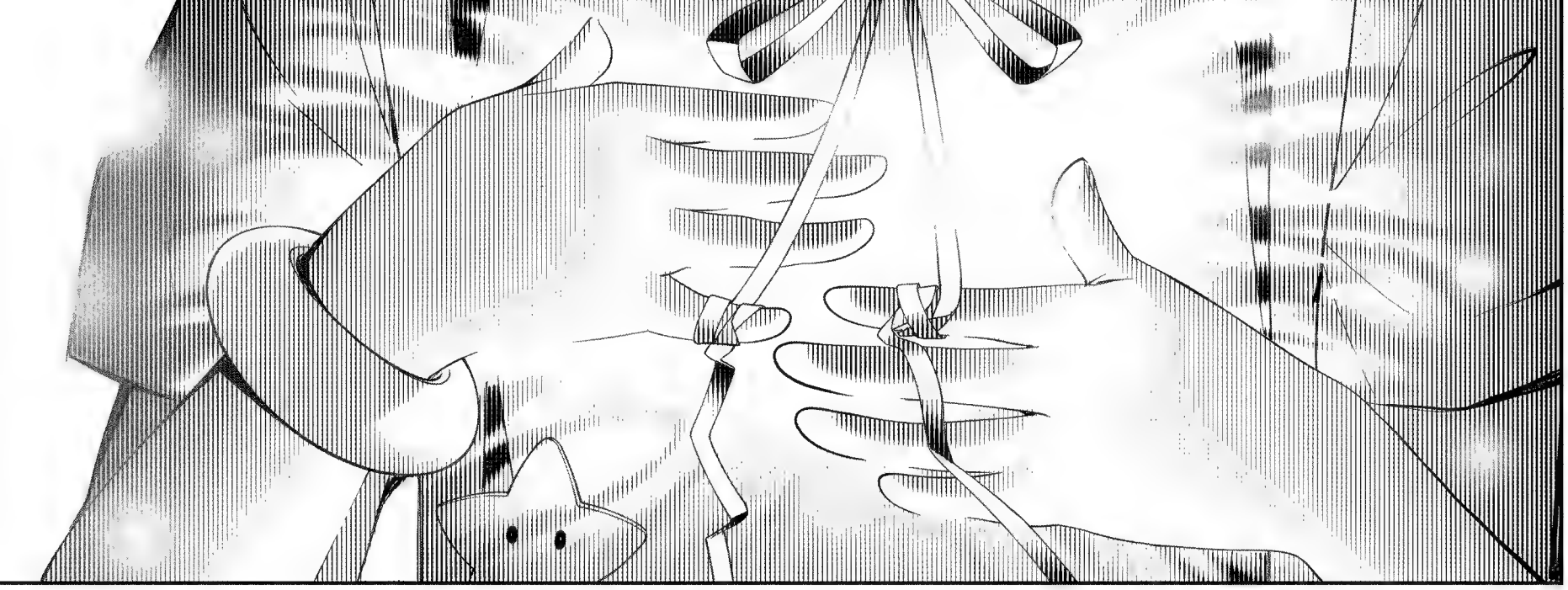
Mister Arya-ryagi...

isn't just a physical or architectural thing, right?

After all, the place you call "home"

I'll bring her to her mother's safe and sound—

that is my duty.



It's where all your thoughts and emotions reside.

...

I thought... you might say that.

But I have one last message from Mister Oshino.

Don't y'see, Araragi ?

People go and get saved on their own and that's it.

So out of the kind-ness of my heart, just this once,

I know you're just going to start spout-ing starry-eyed non-sense.

But... no matter what I say...

NECROMANCER KOYOMI

In fact, you inter-vening might only make things worse.

No matter how hard you try, that girl won't come back to life. The root of the problem's still there.

I'll teach you a little trick.

I have no idea what he thinks he's doing with his life.

He really ... does know our every move.

BEEP

STOP PLAYING

No, I don't want that, Oshino.

A "trick" ...?

I'm not planning to do anything as grand as save Hachikuji.

But, if there is a path to salvation out there,

I'm finally starting to get you, Araragi.

I want to be there to help her find it. What's so wrong about that?

I WAS WRONG ABOUT YOU, ARARAGI.

IT LOOKS LIKE

About what?

SKWEEK

SKWEEP

No, not wrong. I had a creeping— or rather *nagging*— feeling about it.

You can say that I am no longer under any illusions,

I suppose.

Hey,

Araragi. You were there...

last Monday

Araragi.

when you found out about the problem I lived with

thanks to a slight misstep on those stairs.

you reached out to me, right?

that very day,

And on that day ...

W-Wait. Wait, no.

We're not having a war!

I might be able to help you out.

KRAK

KRAK

I was thinking,

just maybe, you know...

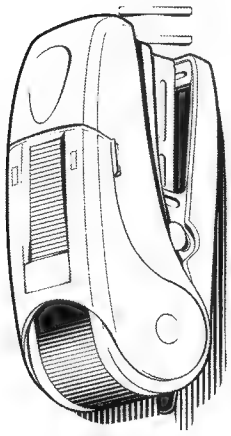
LET'S HAVE

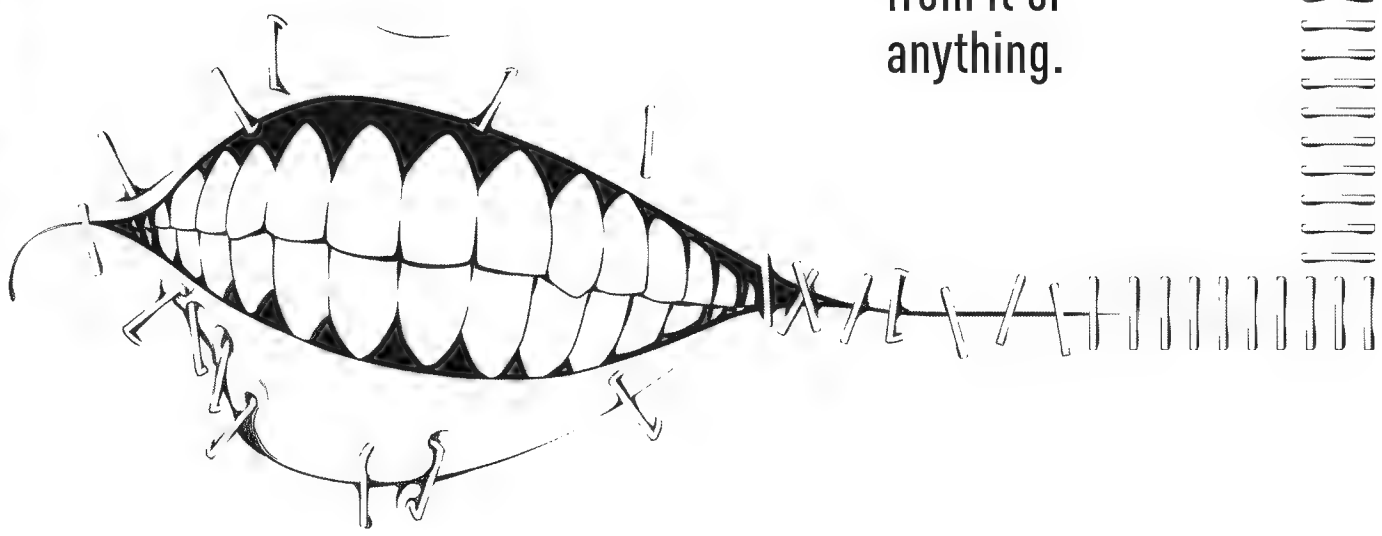
If I'm being honest,

I've been having trouble figuring out *why* you did that.

Actually, there isn't a single thing to gain from saving a girl who'd staple a person's mouth shut.

I mean, why would you? It's not like you'd benefit from it or anything.





I thought... you might have saved me... because it was me.

Basi-cally ...

It seems I was wrong.

But that wasn't it.

...

you would save anyone, Ara-ragi.

Wouldn't you?

even if you hadn't had a similar problem or known Mister Oshino,

you still would have done what you did for me... right? At least that's how Mister Oshino made it sound.

Save ...? Hold on ...

Don't exaggerate so much. I didn't do anything special. Anyone would've done what I did in that situation...

Look, you even said it yourself. I just happened to have a similar problem... and I just happened to know Oshino.

I wonder ...

What did that bastard tell her...?!

A bunch of lies peppered with half-truths, I'm sure.

At the very least,

I wouldn't think to talk to a grade schooler just because I saw her standing in front of a residential map twice.

...Huh.

Really ...?

When you're on your own long enough, you start to think that maybe you're special.

After all, when you're alone, you aren't just "one of the crowd."

But

that's because ... you *can't join them.*

It's funny, really.

All it means is that you can never be one of them, and that's it.

THUNK

That's why

but the only one who did anything was you, Araragi.

Actually, plenty of people noticed my problem,

I've been having all kinds of fantasies about you this week.

Huh?! Like what ?!

HEH!

Oh, what a satisfying week it was.

...

But it looks like... I slightly misunderstood the situation.

KSSHT

All right, let's go.

Go ?

Go where ?

Naoetsu Town Map

Where else?

To Miss Tsunade's house, of course.

We're taking Hachikuji there, the good Samaritans we are.

So follow me.

I'll show you the little "trick" Mister Oshino taught me.

Oh.

And Araragi?

Huh?

I

LOVE

YOU.

...

Congratulations.

I LOVE YOU.

化け猫 *bake neko*

MAYOIsnail

3

語 *gatari*

語 *gatari*

物 *mono*

MAYOIsnail

3

化 *bake*

BAKEMONOGATARI

Hey, Hachi-kuji.

We're leav-ing.

But I can't find my shoe that went flying from the swings.

Oh...

AAAGH

WHY WAS MY SHOE IN YOUR BACKPACK, MISTER ARARAGI?!

Here ya go.

WERE YOU PLANNING ON TAKING IT HOME IF I HADN'T SAID ANYTHING ?!

Don't make me out to be such an awful guy.

There are a lot of perverts in the world, you know.

I was just holding onto it to make sure that none of them grabbed it.

COULD ONE OF THOSE PERVERTS BE THE CAMOUFLAGE HOODIE-WEARING HIGH SCHOOLER STANDING IN FRONT OF ME?!

DON'T CHANGE THE SUBJECT!

Hey, Senjo-gahara! Don't leave us behind.

Listen, Mayoi.

but I'll be handing out tickets to my suitors soon, so please wait your turn!

Honestly!! I know it's because of how attractive I am,

PIP-SQUEAKS ?!

Sorry, but I'm not into pip-squeaks.

Fine, then. I'll call you MISTER MAN ALIKE.

THAT'S NOT FUNNY!

THAT MAKES IT SOUND LIKE I'M NOT EVEN HUMAN!

Perhaps

It's so bad that I wouldn't be surprised if it got banned from the airwaves someday... You're truly terrible, Mister Beast Alike...

What an awful insult...

That insult's just as bad, if not worse.

Hey, don't act like it's okay to bring up that one again.

we were being a little too lighthearted.

This is it.

We're here.

Park

Destination

for less than 10 minutes instead of the hour plus his trick took,

and even though we could've gone about 500 meters

"one-time trick"

may have eaten up a little time,

Even though Mèmè Oshino's

reached the address on Hachi-kuji's note.

GOAL!! Congratulations!

we easily ... and truly suddenly ...

If the aberration is something like a ghost,

it can't accumulate memories or experiences itself,

or so it seems.

It only has "thoughts."

In other words, Araragi, to compare this to the theory of relativity... it's like how time passes at a different rate

inside a black hole and around it.

That's because time refers to changes in space.

Compared to the exterior of a black hole, time essentially stops in its center.

In a black hole, gravity is so heavy that it slows its own movements.

"Relativity."

For some reason, I remember... Hanekawa once telling me that.

WOOM

When Hachikuji's physical body was lost to the accident,

something was left behind, bound by her name.

It was "desire"

...or something like that.

It was heavy... so heavy

that it broke away from its surroundings and still hasn't left.

In other words, the timeline distorted both inside and out.

The weight of those thoughts created discord in her environment.

"Always a child," you say.

She will never "grow up."

"Always a child," you say.

Until someone steps in and finds Hachikuji,

it's the same as her *not existing at all.*

up— that I'll always be a child.

She will "always be a child" frozen in time ...!!

Then you're just like me.

She has no memory of the "outside world" that's always changing at a dizzying pace.

yet she has no "incremental memories."

If she were alive, Hachikuji would be older than Senjogahara and me...

And so,

Hachikuji doesn't know about any new streets that were made for town planning.

But we have the fresh, black asphalt.

As long as we follow it like some sort of treasure map...

Her powers as a snail aberration won't help you that much. No, not "won't,"

but

can't.

SURPRISED?

A Lost Cow plays pranks and it's a little mysterious... but that's it.

Ara-ragi.

Hey, Ara-ragi.

You know,

I'm pretty sure that's what it is.

I mean, aren't people you don't know the same as people who don't exist?

Time that isn't shared is just time... that never existed.

So, that person... that *some-one*...

when they find their special someone ...

when they find *me*,

the pair will finally have the time to be together.

Hey...

Senjo-gahara.

Yes... I'm sure of it.

Is this really the place ...?

How is this...

possible ...?

No admittance 敷地内

ND ALE

☎ 9876-54-3210

Do not enter

FOR SALE

But when you think of how much the town has changed,

it wouldn't make sense if our destination was the only thing that stayed the same.

Realty

Town planning...

But does it really ...

have to be this harsh?

I... could've predicted this... from the start...

Things never fall that neatly in place.

Couldn't *this* fall into place, at least...?

...

Wa—

ah—

Was it all for nothing ?

Wa
—

aa
—

aa
—

If the very place

the Lost Cow was trying to get to is gone,

then Hachikuji really is a lost snail... forever drifting, spiraling round and round with no end in sight.

really this cruel ...?

Is the world ...

What a disaster.

Aaahhh!

Ah!

Ah!

Ah—

Ah...

KEEP OU

HACHI-KUJI!!!

Hachi-kuji...

I'M
BACK!!
I'M
HOME!!

I... couldn't see a thing.

But I think that Hachikuji must have found something there.

In place of Hachikuji's frozen time,

a new time had begun.

Did ... the girl say some-thing?

Yeah. She said, "I'm home."

I see ...

FOR SALE

敷地内立入禁止
No admittance

LAND FOR SALE
(KK) Miracle Realty ☎ 876-54-3210

KEEP OUT

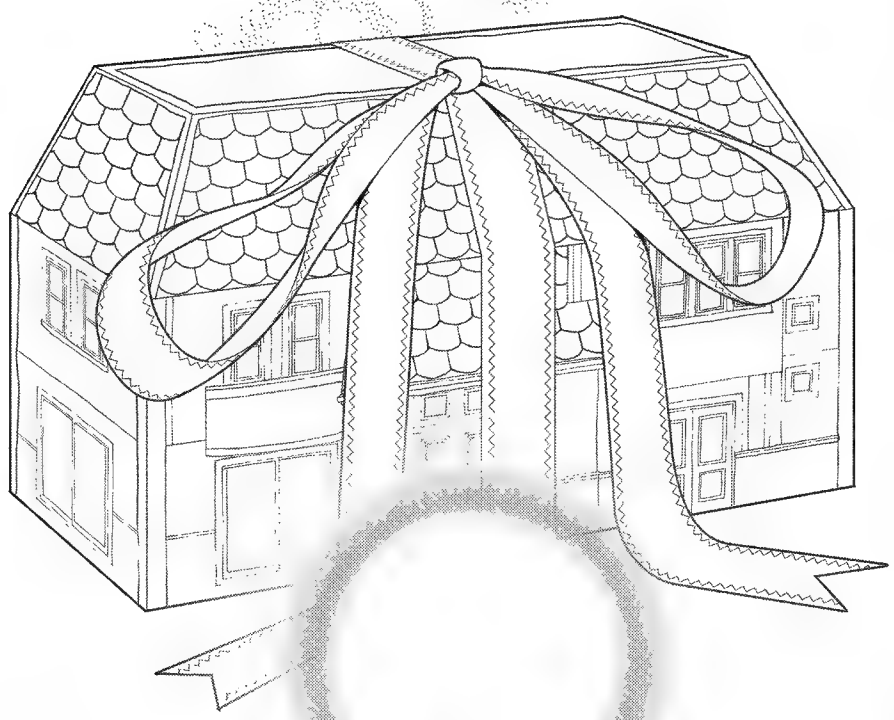
Do not enter

FOR SALE

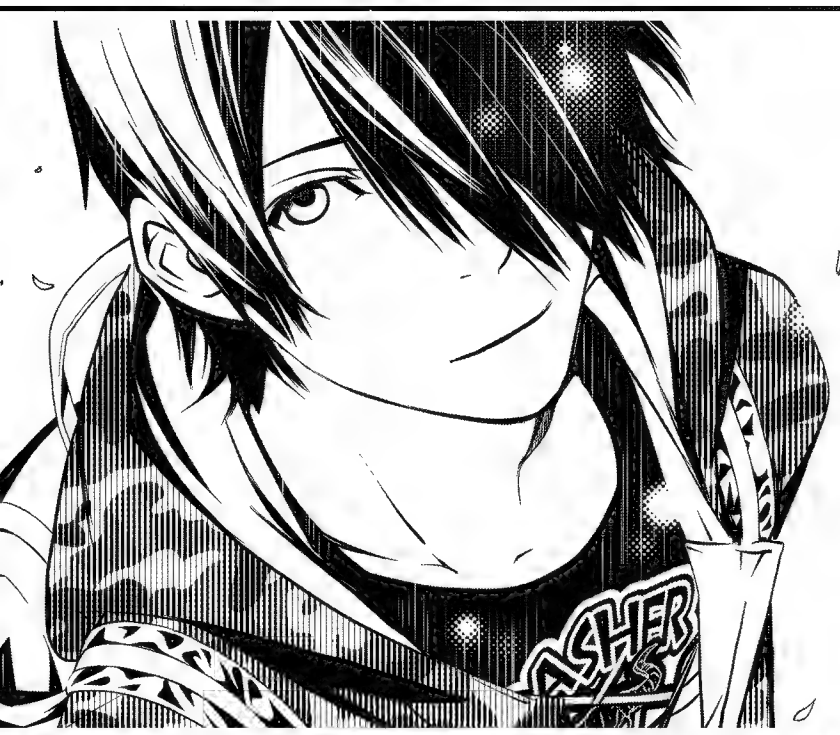
NO ENTR

You know, that's a really wonderful story.

to where her emotions reside.



Hachi-kuji... made it back safely



I should be heading home, too.

Come to think of it... it's my turn to make dinner tonight.

Good work, Araragi.

You looked halfway cool there.

By your standards, that is.

Shopping Str

GIGAMAX

I really didn't do all that much. If anything, you were the one who did all the work.

Even that trick wouldn't have worked without someone who knows the area like you.

Perhaps... well, I guess I helped in a few other ways, too.

LAND FOR SALE

Contact (KK) Miracle Realty

Though I was surprised that it was an empty plot of land.

After what happened to their only daughter,

it must have been so unbearable that the whole family moved... or something like that.

But Hane-kawa.

though.

I don't know... maybe.

We don't even know... if Hachikuji's mother is alive,

In truth, Hanekawa probably knew.

About the Tsunade family's tragedy,

about the move... and even about Hachikuji's true identity.

Hanekawa knew every-thing.

Well, she *might* have.

GULP

ゴクッ…

know-ing her.

It does seem possi-ble...

As for the ability to see through it all... Hanekawa just might top that bastard Oshino.

Don't let Senjogahara worry over you too much, okay?

Let's "Ghostify"

Hanekawa... didn't want to bother me while I was snooping around.

And I bet she didn't want to get in Hachikuji's way, either.

Of course, she also didn't want to bother Senjogahara.

Yeah... that's the kind of person Hanekawa is.

She'll be fair to everyone 'til the very end.

I saw something.

THUNK

I think...

The distance between us is so uncertain that it almost feels like a labyrinth.

Maybe she's just on the other side of the wall that separates us.

Or maybe she's so far away I can't even see her...

But now...
I know.

It's as if new, clear paths are being built in my heart.

At the very least, deep down,

I've found my way out of one "maze."

Being fair to every-one means

not being on anyone's side.

On this road... ahead of me is...

By the way, Araragi,

you still haven't told me how you feel about me, you know.

MIS-UNDER-STAND-ING?

I think you're misunderstanding things, Senjogahara. You've got your indebtedness, for lack of a better word, mixed up with other feelings because of the situation we were in, and—

Hold on a second.

people fall prey to love more readily in a crisis, which makes complete light of human reason and utterly fails to take into account the thorny situation two friends are put in when their true natures are thereby revealed?

Could you be thinking of the idiotic principle that says

Suspension-Bridge Effect Theory: Defeated

I do think you'd be stupid to confess your love on a shaky suspension bridge, but...

I LOVE YOO-OOU!

RATTLE

RATTLE

RATTLE

WHAA?!

LET GOOOO!!

Well, fine...

You were talking about wanting to pay me back, right?

I don't know, it just doesn't feel right.

I feel like I'm calling in a debt and taking advantage of you.

No, that was just... AN EXCUSE.

I only wanted to hand you the initiative.

I thought I should let you be the one to confess your love to me...

which is why I acted that way.

You foolish man. You let a valuable opportunity slip away.

You've wasted the one and only time I'll ever prop up another person.

Huh?

Don't worry, Araragi. I really don't feel that indebted to you.

NO FISHING ZONE

What ...? I don't know... how to feel about that, either...

Oh, really ...?

But, personally ... I prefer it that way.

Because, Araragi, you'd save anyone.

I think I'd still find you special.

Yes, even if I watched you save Hanekawa, for example,

Okay, that's a bit of an exaggeration,

but I guess I can still admit

that it's fun talking to you.

That's all.

...

But it's not like we've talked that much...

Mon-day and Tues-day —

and today. That's it.

Right.

Which is why I want to talk

to you more.

To spend more time together.

To get to know.

To get to love.

I don't think it's any-thing as cheap ...

as love at first sight.

maybe it's that I want to make the effort to learn to love you.

How do I put it? Well...

But I'm not so patient that I want to spend time lining everything up.

But, Mister Araragi. Isn't the feeling we call love a very conscious thing from the start?

Working hard to stay in love, huh.

Well...

I guess ... that's one way to do it.

THOK

You know,

I'm pretty greedy.

I settle for nothing but extremes.

I hope you know what you've got yourself into.

This is what you get when you're kind to everyone you meet.

Think of it as getting mixed up with a foul woman.

In a dismal turn,

you caught the eye of a love-starved psycho virgin

who falls for anyone who shows her the slightest bit of kindness.

AT LEAST DIE WITH ME!!

THAT'S JUST MURDER !!

I'm going to kill you and go on the run.

If you turn down this request, Araragi,

She really is.

She's a funny one.

I want you to make me a promise.

Can I give you just one condition...?

just one thing.

In that case,

all the rules I've set for myself.

She's barged right in and destroyed

Intensity as a human

If our opinions ever clash, I want us to talk about it.

Don't be so nice about it.

But I don't want you doing that anymore.

and vice versa.

You act like you can see things that you can't,

Araragi.

So,

Consider it done.

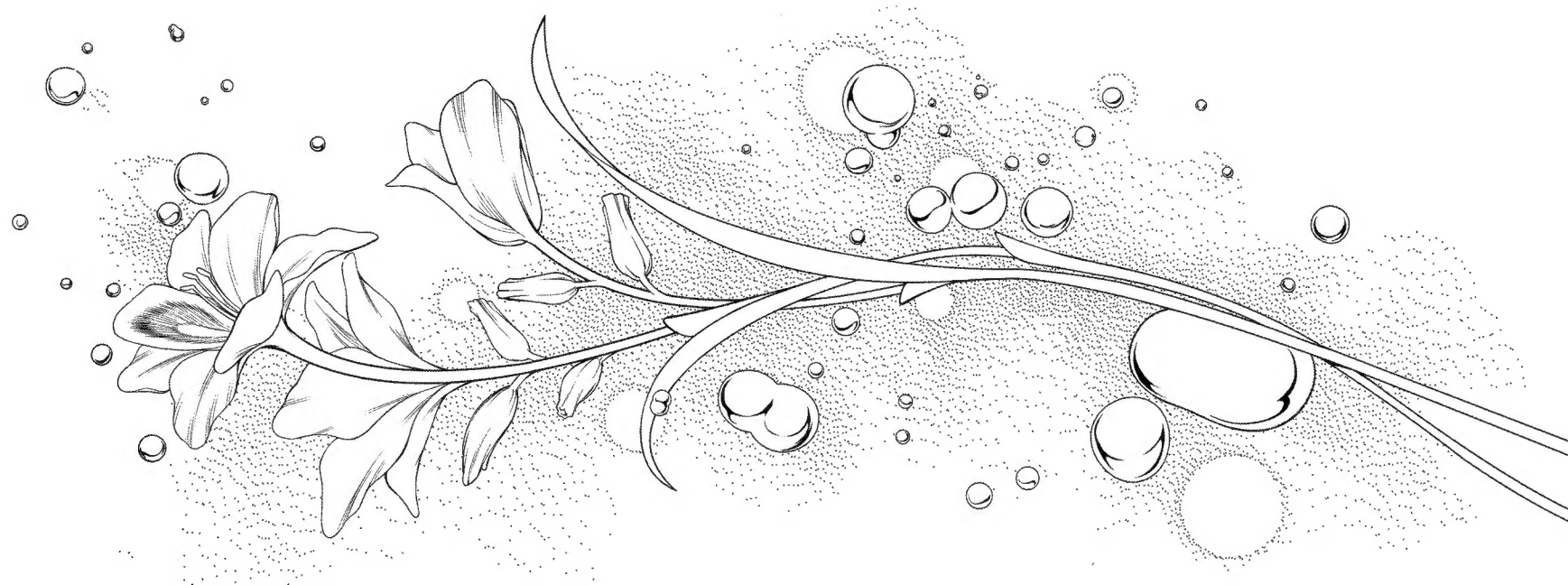
you could say it... out loud for me?

Do you think

I do hope it catches on.

Huh?

Senjo-
gahara,
my
heart
smelts
for you.



Continued in Volume 4

Next Volume Preview

BAKEMONOGATARI 4
Koyomi has sent Mayoi on her way
and accepted Hitagi's feelings for him.
Just as they set forth
on their new paths,
Naoetsu Town Map
a monkey blocks their way. "Suruga Monkey" begins.
COMING MAY 2020!

BAKEMONOGATARI (manga) 3

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